

# Secretary of State Police



**BUYING OR  
SELLING A  
VEHICLE**



Jesse White  
Illinois Secretary of State  
[www.cyberdriveillinois.com](http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com)

**Most people do not buy or sell vehicles frequently, and there can be confusion about the procedure. You may be excited about buying a new or used vehicle and trying to make your best "deal" without paying attention to other details. This can be especially critical when it comes to purchasing a used vehicle. Following is a list of items that you, the consumer, need to be aware of when purchasing a vehicle to avoid problems and complaints down the road.**



Make sure there is a title when you buy a vehicle. A dealer is obligated to send the title to the Secretary of State to be transferred to your name. On private sales, you should be given a valid title at the time of delivery.



By law, a dealer has 20 days to send your title, transfer and sales tax to the Secretary of State.



If you purchase a vehicle from a private individual, you have 20 days to get the title put in your name. The vehicle must be registered and have license plates put on immediately.



When buying a vehicle from a private individual, the name on the front of the title should match the name of the person selling the vehicle to you.



Examine the vehicle title to make sure there is no discrepancy in the mileage and that all previous liens have been released.

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You have the right to ask where the vehicle came from. You may think you are getting a local trade when, in fact, the car came from an auction house or out of state.



Check the vehicle identification number (VIN) with the title and bill of sale. There is something wrong if all the numbers do not match.



Check the VIN plate on the driver's side dash and compare it with the mylar sticker on the driver's door frame area. Both VINs should match.



Be wary when purchasing a used vehicle that you suspect has been wrecked. All sellers, whether a vehicle dealer or private individual, are obligated to furnish the buyer with a Disclosure of Rebuilt Vehicle form whenever a salvage title has been issued on any vehicle. This will let you know you are dealing with a rebuilt vehicle.



Remove your license plates from your old car before you sell it. It is against the law for someone else to drive a vehicle with your plates. This will also avoid any liability on your part if the buyer should get into an accident with your plates on their vehicle.

**Contact the Secretary of State Department of Police regarding any improper activity by someone trying to sell you a vehicle or if you have problems with a title or registration on a vehicle purchased from a dealership. Remember, an informed consumer is a better protected consumer when purchasing a vehicle.**

## For more information

Contact the nearest Secretary of State Department of Police office:

SOS Police District #1  
405 N. Mannheim Rd. • Bellwood, IL 60104  
708-338-7555

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SOS Police District #2  
4501 E. State St. • Rockford, IL 61108  
815-987-7560

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SOS Police District #3  
2719 S. 11th St. • Springfield, IL 62703  
217-785-5486

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SOS Police District #4  
220 S. 12th St. • Mt. Vernon, IL 62864  
618-244-4525

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SOS Police District #4A  
1269 N. 89th St. • East St. Louis, IL 62203  
618-398-7790



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